Exploring Your Options

For information about fertility preservation or to get a referral to a fertility preservation center near you, please call the FERTLINE! This resource is available to patients, families and health care professionals.

FERTLINE 
866-708-FERT (3378)
oncofertility.northwestern.edu

Online Resources:
Myoncofertility.org
Oncofertility.northwestern.edu
Fertilehope.org
SaveMyFertility.org
Stupidcancer.com
Youngsurvival.org

facebook.com/pages/Oncofertility-Consortium/274654090671
twitter.com/oncofertility

The Oncofertility Consortium® is a comprehensive program that addresses the needs of young cancer patients who want to preserve their fertility. Our efforts are supported by funds from private philanthropy, government and institutional grants, and patient service revenue. We invite you to help us achieve our daily goals in patient care, research, and education. Your commitment would advance promising research; recruit talented physician-scientists; develop new educational programs; or expand our existing efforts.

For more information about giving options, please contact:

Courtney Weeks
Senior Associate Director,
Major Gifts
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www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/giving
Planning For Your Future Family

More than ever, cancer patients are surviving their disease and can look forward to the future. The ability to have children and build a family is important to cancer survivors. Many therapies that improve survival for cancer patients have side effects including loss of fertility and early menopause.

Oncofertility is a new, interdisciplinary field that bridges oncology (the study of cancer) and women’s health to expand and provide good options for preserving fertility in patients facing fertility-threatening therapies.

The National Physicians Cooperative (NPC) is a nationwide network of fertility preservation centers that participate in the NIH-funded Oncofertility Consortium. The Consortium aims to explore and preserve the reproductive future of patients facing fertility-threatening cancer treatments.

The NPC provides a framework for:
- Nationwide referral of patients for fertility preservation procedures in their area
- Multicenter clinical research studies in reproductive medicine
- Dissemination of best practices and clinical breakthroughs
- A national ovarian tissue repository to foster research to improve fertility preservation options for women and girls

National Physicians Cooperative
Fertility Preservation Programs

What are Options Before Cancer Therapy?

In vitro fertilization and embryo banking
Embryo banking is the most established form of fertility preservation and is an excellent option for women who have a male partner or are interested in using donor sperm. For breast cancer patients, there are specific ovarian stimulation protocols that may be considered to reduce exposure to estrogen. Embryos are frozen for future use.

Egg banking
In recent years, significant advances in freezing eggs for future use have occurred. Early clinical experiences suggest that egg banking may have similar success to embryo banking, but it is still too early to know that the success is as good as banking embryos.

Ovarian tissue banking
One ovary is removed through a minor surgical procedure called laparoscopy. The portion of ovary containing eggs is frozen for later use. This option is experimental but may be the best option for women who must start their cancer treatments immediately.

Fertility sparing surgery
For patients who will receive abdominal or pelvic irradiation, it may possible to move the ovaries surgically out of the field of radiation. For patients with early stage gynecologic cancers, it may be able to conserve reproductive organs at the time of cancer surgery.

Additional options
Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), ovarian suppression, ovarian shielding, psychological support and financial counseling are among other options discussed at a fertility preservation consultation.

Safety of pregnancy after cancer
Thus far, research on the safety of pregnancy after cancer is reassuring. Further research is necessary to confirm these findings.

What are Options After Cancer Therapy?

After cancer therapy, survivors who desire to have children may wish to have a consultation with a reproductive endocrinologist about fertility potential.

Fertility treatment and assisted reproduction
For women who are subfertile after cancer therapy, traditional assisted reproductive technologies may be appropriate to help some cancer survivors achieve pregnancy.

Third party reproduction: egg donation
For cancer survivors who become menopausal with cancer treatment, egg donation is a highly effective option for becoming pregnant.

Third party reproduction: gestational surrogacy
A gestational surrogate is a woman who will carry a pregnancy for intended parents. Because some women are unable to carry a pregnancy after cancer therapy, having a gestational surrogate carry their pregnancy may be an option for these cancer survivors.

Adoption
Adoption is another option for cancer survivors to achieve a family.

Oncofertility Clinical Trials
The Oncofertility Consortium is actively engaged in research to address issues of reproductive health in cancer survivors.

- National Fertility Preservation Registry
- Oncofertility Consortium Ovarian Tissue Cryopreservation Study

In addition, there are a number of additional studies at individual NPC centers. For more information, please call our research team at: (866) 708-FERT (3378)